THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

War Prayers and a Neuter God.

War prayers constitute a real difficulty for scrupulous Christians. Some feel that war is not a fit subject for Christian prayer, and so in their prayers they make no reference direct or indirect to the war in which we are engaged. Others feel that although we may, as Christians, pray about the war—that it may be so guided as to secure the advancement of the Kingdom of God on earth and its extending reign of righteousness, love, and freedom among mankind—yet we ought not to pray for victory, although we ought to pray for peace.

It is quite true that we have no examples of prayer for war-time in the New Testament and that—we may assume—because there was no need for them. As Milton's ode, 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity,' asserts, it was a time of universal peace:

> 'No war or battle's sound
> Was heard the world around:
> The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
> The hookèd chariot stood
> Unstain'd with hostile blood,
> The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng.'

Our New Testament justification for prayer about war or about anything else is found in St. Paul's words, 'In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be

made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds.

If we can live in a world at war without being troubled by it, then we are under no obligation to offer our prayers about war; but in that case, we are probably not Christians. On the other hand, no Christian can pray for victory as though it were his absolute right to receive victory from God. We are taught by the example of the Saviour to utter all our petitions — the most urgent and, as it may seem to us, the most righteous — in His spirit who said

> 'Father, not my will but thine be done.'

The American Church Magazine, *The Chronicle*, in its October issue in an interesting article entitled 'The Battling Bishop of Raphoe — John Lesley,' publishes the following war prayer composed by the Bishop:

> 'Almighty God unto whom our hearts are open, Thou knowest the righteousness of the cause we have taken in hand, and that we are actuated by the clearest conviction that our motive is just; but, as our manifold sins and wickedness are not hid from Thee, we presume not to claim Thy protection, trusting in our own perfect innocence. Yet if *we* be sinners, *they* are not saints. Though then Thou vouchsafest not to be with us, be not against us, but *stand neuter* this day, and let the arm of flesh decide it.'

Lesley, a seventeenth century North of Ireland Bishop, was himself a great warrior and even as Bishop raised and led a number of armed forces. His episcopal palace which he constructed as a stronghold he named Castle Lesley. He would seem also to have been a very honest man entirely devoted to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England. His prayer reflects both these characteristics.

Article XXXVII of the Church of England declares:

> 'It is lawful for Christian men, at the command of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars (*bellis justis*).'

The Bishop as a Magistrate felt the obligation to do this in the terrible times of outrage and violence in which he lived; and yet, at the same time, he rightly hesitated to ask God to grant victory to his side. The Bishop did not feel that he and his forces justly deserved victory. Possibly, also, an unconscious spirit of sportsmanship made the Bishop feel that all he could ask in such circumstances was 'a fair field and no favour.'

Probably there are many fighting in His Majesty's forces to-day who feel as the Bishop did, although they would not venture to express their convictions in the form of a prayer. Their unspoken prayer would be that of the Philistines:

> 'Be strong, and quit you like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you; quit you like men and fight.'

The Crux of Christian Education for the Nation.

The Christian Churches in this country are united upon the need of teaching the Christian religion in the schools of the nation. Where they do not seem yet to have secured the united front is on the issues:

(1) What is the Christian religion which ought to be taught? and
(2) What are the best methods of teaching it?

Many of our educationists are for allowing each denomination to settle these two issues in their own way in the denominational schools, assuming denominational schools are to be assisted by government grants. This seems to us to be the only practical way of treating these issues so far as the denominational schools are concerned. Whether such denominational religious education should be subject to inspection by denominational inspectors appointed by Whitehall is a minor matter. We should strongly favour such inspection.

It is clear, however, that denominational schools can only constitute a small proportion of all the schools of the nation, and that as time goes on, and the standards of national education rise, these schools must become a still smaller proportion of our whole educational system. With regard, then, to the great bulk of the schools which are not denominational, we are frankly opposed to allowing the representatives of the ecclesiastical denominations any controlling voice as to (1) the nature of the religious education to be given, (2) the educational methods to be used. We desire the religious education in the undenominational schools to be non-sectarian. We have to confess that for the most part the religious instruction given in the denominational schools is sectarian. It divides rather than unites the nation.

The Churches have failed to secure religious unity in this country. We admit that to secure religious unity is not an easy task. We believe, however, that with the exception of the Roman Catholics, religious unity could have been secured. It has not been secured, and the prospects of religious unity seem to us to be more remote than they were in 1920. In short, the ecclesiastical denominations have had a fair and full chance of securing religious unity and they have failed.

It is most important, however, in the interests of the nation's social and cultural unity, that we should have a national system of Christian education in the undenominational schools of the nation and that now our nation itself should undertake the teaching of the Christian religion in all these schools so as to secure Christian unity and to advance Christian culture.

Besides being non-sectarian, the national teaching of the Christian Religion must be scientific. To this the ecclesiastical bodies are, deep down, opposed. They are always out to teach prescribed conclusions, to make the interpretation of the New Testament conform to traditional dogmas and not to reconstitute and re-state Christian doctrine in the light of scientific, historical, and critical interpretation of the Bible.

The *Guardian* (which represents the official policy of the Church of England) in its leading article of November 7th, entitled 'The Historical Point of View,' asserts:

> 'No sooner have those in authority drawn attention to the ignorance of the Christian faith which characterizes the young to-day than there appear people who want to teach the Truth as if it were a chapter in the study of anthropology or comparative religion. The gospels would be read in schools, not as the media of divine truth, but as documents in the latest extension of humanist studies . . . It has been made clear by writers in those journals which deal with the more specialized aspects of education that there will be opposition to doctrinal teaching. Such opposition is likely from more than one quarter. Many will want to whittle down the full teaching of the Church. But it is not only the content of what is taught which must be of vital importance, it is the *manner of the teaching*. It is in this that the Historical Point of View may be our undoing.'

The *Guardian* correctly visualises the situation which is developing. It is rightly apprehensive of the employment of the historical method in teaching the Christian religion and of the complete freedom combined with competence which such teach-

ing demands. Yet, in the case of pupils in the upper forms there is no other possible method. Our Christian teaching has got to be true to history or it must fail. Of course, it has not only to be true to history but true to our contemporary scientific knowledge. It has also to be true to our developing moral and spiritual conviction, and, last but not least, it must have as its objective the creation of the Christian character in its pupils and a Christian atmosphere in our schools.

If the loyalty of teachers and taught is to be secured the spirit of freedom must be supreme. The undertaking is one of immense difficulty. Many experiments will have to be made and many consequent readjustments initiated. The motto will have to be *solvitur ambulando*. The greatest need of all for those who would create Christian character is that they should possess it, and our educational authorities must frankly realize that Christian character can exist without ecclesiastical membership and alliances. This is a hard saying and difficult of acceptance by those who feel that they owe much to their own Church membership, but when we have reached a situation in which some four-fifths of the nation practically possess no ecclesiastical homes we must look to the State to create a spiritual home for the youth of the nation in our national system of Christian education.

We cannot stress the phrase 'Christian education' too strongly, and refuse to allow the figment of religious instruction to be substituted for it. General information is not without its uses. But what the nation needs and, we believe, deep down desires, is a Christian education for our youth—the development in them or the creation in them of Christian morals, Christian manners, Christian values, and the Christian ideal of life. It may be said you cannot secure these things without the Churches. It is up to the State to show that it can secure them in the four-fifths of the population which are outside the influence of practising Church membership.

The Foundations of Religious Education.

The significance of the following letter demanded that it should be transferred from our correspondence pages to the

'Signs of the Times.' The writer, an R.A.F. Chaplain, served as a combatant in the Great War: he later attained the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, and at the outbreak of the present war resigned his curacy in order to take up Chaplain's work.

'Since I have been a Chaplain in the Royal Air Force I have dealt with about twelve thousand young men who are a section of the pick of the country. About four thousand have been confirmed. Of the remaining eight thousand, very few know what Confirmation means or know the meaning of the Christian religion.

'They are, however, fine young men, anxious to serve, cheerfully giving up much to do so, keen, kindly and tolerant.

'It may be of value for the future of England to discover how much of their goodness is induced by public restraints in which they have lived and how much is the genuine overflow of interior motives.

'The highest incentive is, of course, living for the approval of God, but they have never been educated to that.

'There are, however, certain motives from which great character proceeds and which can be found to some extent in all these young men. It is on these motives that I believe religious education should build. By building on these motives religion will be a natural growth.

'Here, then, are four of them:

'First the *sense of honour*. Many of them have had their first experience with that motive in the love received from their parents. A point of honour is created when any man is deeply cared about. There are some things which he may not do without shame. The profoundest effect of being genuinely loved is a sense of sacredness in life, and, if a man is fortunate, that sense of sacredness grows with the years. That sense of sacredness is in most men I have met. *Noblesse oblige* does not depend on class.

'A second high incentive is *pride in fine workmanship*. A man hardly gets his eye on anything in life more ennobling than someone doing something as beautifully as he can do it, for the inner satisfaction of doing it that way. This motive is as practical as it is fine. Since the life of the air crew and the results they achieve depend on the thoroughness of maintenance, R.A.F. mechanics are taught thoroughness in their work from the beginning. This develops into a genuine pride in their own workmanship so that they care profoundly about doing whatever they have to do as well as they can do it for the sheer joy of doing it that way. This is a fine motive and redeems their lives from all drudgery.

'A third area of high incentive is *sportsmanship*. With British people hardly anything goes deeper than the love of a game, and when a man rises to the place where he sees all life as a game and wishes to play it fairly, that is an admirable motive. Jesus himself said: 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them.' That, I take it, is the noblest statement ever made of the basic principle of sportsmanship. These men may lack religious faith but we can count on them, in any situation, to play the game. That is a fine motive.

'A fourth area of high incentive is *love of adventure*. In every realm the world has been moved forward by men and women in whom the incentive became dominant somehow to annex their strength to a cause greater than themselves, which, if they could, they might leave, when they died, further on than when they started. That is a high motive.

'It may be objected that by building on these motives I am putting the cart before the horse, that Christianity is the cause of these motives. That is true inasmuch as generations of Christian thinking have produced these motives in young Englishmen to-day, who themselves acknowledge no religious faith. But it is also true that many men who profess Christian faith have not the same pride in fine workmanship, sense of sportsmanship and love of adventure as these young men.

'Is it not better to build religious faith on these motives which actually exist than to bore them with dogmas and creeds? In building religious faith I suggest that Prayer and the Life of Jesus are the best points on which to concentrate.'

That our Chaplain's diagnosis of the things that count with his men in the sphere of conduct and ideals is sound we have no doubt. We think that perhaps, instead of giving to his fourth sphere the designation of 'Love of Advanture,' we should have named it 'Life's call to serve some greater cause than our merely personal and domestic interests'—in short, as the American poet expressed it, to 'hitch our wagon to a star.'

A distinguished lady once said to the writer of these notes:

'Outside his business, there are only two things that interest the average Englishman, and religion is not one of them. They are sport and politics.'

There is much truth in this, but believers in the Christian religion cannot be satisfied that this should be the case. As individuals we need the Christian religion: our social, economic and political life also needs the Christian religion: so also does our international life. The problem is how to weave the Christian religion into our life so that it is part of the very texture of that life, and not something which exists as 'an extra' and in another order of experience. We want our religion to possess the same reality as the current coin of the realm and not, if we may use Samuel Butler's phrase, to be merely the 'artificial coinage of the musical banks.'

This is our Chaplain's aim. He wishes religion to be in the lives of his young men, both natural and real. He bases it on ideals which are already accepted by those whom he would win to the Christian religion and he develops the Christian religion

out of those ideals and experiences. He teaches those for whom he is responsible to pray and to study the life of Jesus as we have it in the Gospels. It was said of Canon Dalton, the Tutor of George V, that he taught his distinguished pupil to do two things — to say his prayers daily, and to read his Bible daily — and that these formed the basis of our late Sovereign's character. We think our Chaplain is right in restricting the Bible Study to the life of Jesus. General reading of the Bible to-day creates, for many, more religious difficulties than it solves, unless they can have a teacher at hand to guide them.

Sir George Adam Smith once said — the dictum does not occur in his published works — 'The mystery and the treasure of the religion of Israel is its prophetism.' Of the Christian religion it might be said its mystery and treasure is the Personality, Mission and Message of Jesus. The more Christian study is concentrated there, the more completely will the Christian find himself dedicated to those eternal values which constitute the very life of the Christian religion.

Of course, our Chaplain's method is not going to satisfy many Christian teachers and pastors. They wish to impart much more than that to their converts, and in many cases by demanding more from them they lose them. It should be noted, however, that our Chaplain prepares his young men for Confirmation for which they present themselves as their public declaration of their resolve to try and be Christians. Holy Communion is for them the renewal of their pledge of loyalty to their Lord and Leader. Here we have a combination of effectiveness and simplicity which deserves the serious attention of all those who are seeking to win the young manhood of our nation to the Christian life.

A HEADMASTER'S VIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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ONE of the more pleasing signs of the times is the great and increasing interest being taken by men and women of all creeds, and even of none, in Religious Education. There is now a great opportunity for a step forward along a road which has hitherto seemed to be blocked by barbed wire entanglements. Great opportunities are generally beset by great dangers, and it may well be the task of modern Churchmen to see that these dangers are fairly faced and overcome. If we by-pass our Tobruk we may find ourselves engaged in a tank battle with our own communications cut by an enemy who was blindly ignored. The analogy must not be pressed — these military metaphors are natural at a time like this, but the only real enemy is the Devil himself and our chief object should be to form a united front against him. But here lies the difficulty. A generation or so ago the chief obstacle to the teaching of Divinity in schools lay in the disagreements among the leaders of the various religious bodies themselves. Now that these have been largely composed, or at least have been shewn to be capable of composure, it is natural for the leaders and for the most earnest and enthusiastic of their followers to assume that the troubles are over — the barbed wire of sectarian differences is cut: what then can hinder a steady advance along the road to the desired land of religious education for all. If our leaders had been able to settle their differences out of court — that is, out of school — forty years ago, things might not have come to their present pass, but the chance was missed and history seldom repeats itself in that sense. The present opportunity is not in every respect the same as the one that presented itself at the beginning of this century. It differs in one most important particular. In those days the fundamentals of the Christian religion were not seriously challenged by a considerable number, and

certainly not by a majority, of the teachers themselves. It is very different to-day. No doubt some teachers could be found or trained — willingly trained — to teach Divinity along the lines of the many agreed syllabuses now coming into operation in various parts of the country, but the problem is not thereby solved. It may be shelved instead of solved, and that will only mean storing up trouble for the future.

The leaders of the Churches claim that they have reached a working agreement on Creeds, Worship, Church and Sacraments. The question is *who* has signed this concordat? The answer usually given is, Leaders of the Churches and representatives of the teaching profession. Is this claim justified? We fear not. We are not concerned, for the moment, with the rightness or wrongness of the concordat — we simply want to know *who* is in the agreement.

We are told that the Church leaders can combine and present a united front on creeds, worship, church and sacraments. Then, surely, the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army cannot have been consulted, nor, of course, the Unitarians. But our concern is rather with the teacher. It is they who will have to work this concordat? What have the N.U.T. to say about it? and the I.A.A.M., the I.A.H.M. and the corresponding bodies of head mistresses? To get *some* teachers on our side is not enough if by so doing we alienate the majority. It is not enough to have the majority, or indeed any considerable number neutral — we want to win all over to our side. We believe that there is a possibility of such a victory, but it will not be on the lines of an agreed syllabus unless the teachers as represented by their own organizations have not merely a share but the predominant voice in the making of the syllabus.

We will shew the more excellent way by which this result may conceivably be achieved. Every schoolmaster knows that his business is to train character, and to suppose that his object is merely the imparting of knowledge is to mistake the means for the end. Nearly all schoolmasters accept the Christian Ethic and desire above all things that their pupils shall be exercised in the Christian virtues. Over and over again we meet with intelligent, well educated people who begin an attack on what they conceive to be Christian theology with some such admis-

sion, gladly made : ' Of course I want people to live as much like Christ as possible.' The schoolmaster would like his school to be a little corner of the Kingdom of God and let it be acknowledged with thankfulness that the description fits a good many of the schools as closely as it is likely to fit a community which, by hypothesis, is mainly made up of ordinary healthy young animals.

The Christian Ethic is safe with our schools, or at least it ought to be safe, and with wise handling at this present juncture it will be kept safe for a long time to come. For the next step we must walk even more delicately than Agag if we wish to avoid his fate. We believe that the only ultimate sanction for morality is to be found in Theism but, in dealing with some people, it may be better to avoid the use of the word. An approach can be made along a slightly different line. There is something in man which reaches out beyond his experience of and in the material world : something which may have no obvious survival value and yet is valuable. This something makes an appeal to us that cannot be ignored. It is this something in the growing boy that the schoolmaster loves most of all to evoke. The environment in a good school assists the development of this highest in man. In a very real sense all subjects are branches of Theology, and for the training of the adolescent, the playing field as well as the classroom has its part to perform. If we can get our schoolmaster as far as this we may, still walking like Agag, venture on the next step. It so happens that by far the best text-book on which to base definite teaching on the ethical lines we agree in desiring, is the Bible. It is not the only book, and a wise teacher will not reject any of the children of Wisdom, but the Bible does in fact deal with all the moral problems which are likely to confront us throughout our lives. That it happens also to be written in the most glorious prose of our language is certainly no disadvantage. It must be admitted, however, that it is a difficult book, though its very difficulties can be turned to account if they are resolutely faced. Take as an example — a supreme example as it happens — the problem of suffering. Aeschylos and Sophocles and a great many other writers have much to teach us about human suffering, but there is no other book that can

shew such a continued grappling with the subject as, let us say, Psalms, Job, Isaiah and the Gospels, and if the pupil learns nothing else he must come to see that 'suffering is the lot of us men' and that, by the way we face up to it, much in our lives will be determined.

We have said that the Bible is a difficult book, for so it is, but much may be done to bring out its meaning without an undue expenditure of time or money. Experts can, and do, give short, intensive courses. These too are not easy, but they are surely a small price to pay for so great a prize.

The real danger is lest fancied fears of heresy should cause much of the truth about the Bible to be kept back from the people in the desperate hope of saving some of the remnants of mediaevalism which was shattered by Copernicus. Modern Churchmen have a great task here to hand, for they should be well fitted to deal with this particular danger.

To sum up—*we want morality taught in our schools and we want such a full school life to be provided that the growing child has proper opportunities for all kinds of healthy development. We want the Bible used, though not exclusively, as a text-book to be taught in the full light of modern knowledge.*

But we do *not* want to dictate to the schoolmasters how or even what they are to teach. Inspection is always welcomed by good teachers—the inspector is the expert *liaison* officer. He is not, as some wrongly suppose, a hostile critic; still less is he an outside dictator. The schools know that well enough, and there is no need to anticipate any trouble over inspection.

What *will* cause trouble is any attempt to impose creeds or sacraments on the schools. Unless we are very much mistaken, the schools will not submit to dictation by the clergy no matter how closely the leaders of the various denominations may agree among themselves. Trust the schoolmaster—there is no other way. Compulsion—or contracting out in its various forms—may succeed for a time, but the day of reckoning is only postponed. Victory must ultimately lie with the soldiers in the field and not with the politicians. The enemy is strong: let the politicians see to it that there is no unnecessary bickering behind the lines.

CHRISTIANITY AND CHURCHIANITY

By the Editor.

THERE are four enemies of the Church which she is ever ready to welcome as friends: *ecclesiasticism*, *clericalism* *sacramentalism*, *dogmatism*. When we get the spirit of *ecclesiasticism* and *clericalism*, *sacramentalism* and *dogmatism*, dominating the Christian Religion, we get Churchianity taking the place of Christianity. All four are on the increase in our English Church life to-day, as indeed they have been for many years past, and this constitutes one group of a number of groups of causes which are steadily reducing the influence of the Church in this country. We do not say 'reducing the influence of the Christian Religion.' That religion to-day is by no means solely dependent upon the Church either for its survival, influence or propagation.

What is *ecclesiasticism*? It is the exaltation of the authority and office of the Church beyond what is its due. *Ecclesiasticism* ensues when the Church identifies itself with the Christian Religion. The Church is not the Christian Religion, although it can be, and should be, a very important agent in advancing that religion among mankind. Unfortunately, on many occasions, the Church has been the greatest enemy of the Christian Religion: it has been its scandal and its shame. Alfred Fawkes, in a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge in 1929, described the Church as 'a necessary evil.' Of course in the New Testament the Church is called the Body of Christ, and the Bride of Christ: but a man's body is not the man himself, nor the noblest part of him; and a man's wife, as the prophet Hosea found to his cost, is not the same as he is. It is reasonably open to question whether Jesus Christ ever intended to organize a corporation to extend his Gospel among mankind. Certainly he collected a group of pupils or learners (disciples), whom he called 'the little ones,' and from them he selected twelve whom he called missionaries (apostles), whom he sent forth, after special training, on a tour to proclaim the advent of

the Kingdom of God. That is all the organization we read of in the Gospels. In the teaching of Jesus, preserved in the four Gospels, the word Church only occurs in two passages, and it is more than doubtful if either of these sayings was actually uttered by Jesus. In the one instance (*Mt.* xviii, 17) Jesus is reported as teaching that if, in a certain instance, a man will not hear the Church, then he is to be treated as a Gentile and a publican. Remembering that our Lord was called the friend of publicans, and that he uttered a parable which portrayed a Samaritan as a supreme example of the good neighbour, we cannot imagine that Jesus ever uttered this saying. It was the Primitive Church, not Jesus, who originated it.

In the second instance (*Mt.* xvi, 18) Jesus is recorded as saying to Simon Peter, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will found my Church.' These words are absent from the parallel narrative of Peter's confession of Jesus as the Christ in *Mk.* (the archaic Gospel), *Lk.*, and *Jn.* (vi, 69). Dr. Manson, perhaps our best English critical authority on the sayings of Jesus, writes of this passage:

> '*Mk.* knows nothing of this strong commendation of Peter. Indeed, the Marcan account, taken by itself, would not suggest that Peter's declaration was received with any great enthusiasm by Jesus. And, in any case, the absence of the saying from the Marcan account is very difficult to explain. . . . We should not regard the saying as a genuine utterance of Jesus.' [1]

There seems to be no doubt that Jesus Christ taught nothing about the Church: the great theme of his teaching was the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Kingdom of God. He taught his disciples to pray that this kingdom might come on earth as it is in heaven. Hence it seems just to infer that the Church, so frequently mentioned in the *Acts*, *Epistles* and *Apocalypse*, arose out of conditions subsequent to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

The Church is not, therefore, of the very essence of the Christian Religion, and ought not to be identified with it. The Church can be, and has been on many occasions, a valuable agent and instrument of that religion. It has assisted its propagation and permanence in human society, but it is not the Christian Religion itself. Moreover, in examining the teaching

[1] *The Mission and Message of Jesus*, by Major, Manson and Wright (Macmillan's), p. 494 *f*.

of Jesus, we fail to find that he gives any support to the arguments that the Church is necessary for the discharge of certain Christian duties.

(1) *The Christian Worship of God.*

The teaching of Jesus does not demand large concourses for Divine worship. His emphasis is on secrecy: 'When thou prayest, enter into thy chamber and shut the door.' His reference to concourses for Divine devotion do not include more than two or three disciples. However small the gathering may be, he teaches that it may be assured of the Divine Presence and Power. There is no need for a Church here.

(2) *The Christian Social Life.*

It is rightly maintained that the Christian Religion is a social religion, and it is therefore argued that a Church is necessary in and through which the Christian can and must realize his social obligations. This argument is not valid. The Christian does not need for his social duties what our Free Church brethren call 'a gathered Church.' Jesus teaches that it is in the 'ungathered community' by which he is surrounded that the Christian disciple must realize and discharge his social obligations. The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates the restriction of the sense of social obligation which membership in a religious community can create, and even impose. The ideal neighbour was the Good Samaritan, who in the discharge of social duties transcended the limitations of his Church in contrast to the Priest and Levite, who were socially restricted by their Churchmanship. When in the Gospel of Jesus the term 'brother' comes to mean your fellow-Churchman, not your fellow-human being, we have an example, not only of the narrowing and hardening of the Christian Religion, but of the social restriction exercised on the Christian by ecclesiasticism. In the teaching of Jesus, the Church is certainly not needed either as an agent of Divine worship nor as a sphere of social duty.

If there be no place for *ecclesiasticism* in the Christian Religion, equally there is no place for *clericalism*. In the *Life of Francis Paget*, Bishop of Oxford, it is related that at a certain diocesan examination one of the questions put to the candidates

was 'Name the three evils in the Litany from which the Church prays to be delivered.' The examiner expected the answer 'False doctrine, heresy and schism.' The answer he received was 'Bishops, priests and deacons.'

When the ministers of the Christian Church overstress their importance and authority — still more when they regard themselves as absolutely essential — we suffer from the bane of *clericalism*. Yet how frequently is this the case, and that not only in churches which are strongly sacerdotalist and sacramentarian. It arises out of a fatal weakness of human nature.

> '. . . but man, proud man,
> Drest in a little brief authority,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As make the angels weep.'

Nevertheless, *Abusus non tollit usum* : 'the misuse of a thing does not deprive it of its lawful use.' Ministers may magnify their office : but have they not a very special use in the Christian Church? We speak not here of the Ministry of the Word; laymen may make good preachers and teachers : but there are the Sacraments. The Christian Religion, it is alleged, is a sacramental religion, and needs clergy to minister these sacraments. The simple answer to this assertion is that the Christian ministry is not primarily a sacramental ministry, but a preaching and teaching ministry, and the Christian Church is not essentially a sacramental Church. Moreover, an ordained ministry is not necessary for the sacraments. Baptism, the greatest of the sacraments, since it can only be received once by the Christian, may be administered by any layman or laywoman where necessary, and this rule holds good in the Church of England even to-day. The Holy Communion, where no ordained minister is present, can be validly celebrated by a layman, as the authorities cited by Bishop Lightfoot in his essay on 'The Christian Ministry' clearly indicate. Therefore, although an ordained ministry may be advisable for the celebration of sacramental rites, it is not necessary.

Moreover — and this has only been made clear as the result of the modern critical study of the New Testament — neither Baptism nor the Holy Communion are essential to the Christian Religion as taught by Jesus Christ, *although what they symbolize*

is essential. There is no clear evidence that Jesus Christ instituted and commanded Baptism as a necessity for his disciples. Critical students of St. Matthew's Gospel do not regard the command attributed to Jesus Christ in *Mt.* (xxviii, 19), 'baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost' as actually uttered by the Saviour himself. In all probability these words constitute a later liturgical insertion, as are the Doxology in the Lord's Prayer (*Mt.* vi, 13) and the Baptismal Creed in *Acts* (viii, 37). If Christ actually gave the commandment to baptize to his disciples after his resurrection, it is difficult to account for St. Paul writing to the Corinthians of his ministry in their city:

> 'Howbeit I know not if I baptized any other, for Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel' (*I Cor.* i, 16);

and St. John's Gospel asserts:

> 'Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples' (*Jn.* iv, 2).

Of course what the writer of the Fourth Gospel is here referring to is baptism with water: Christ's baptism is, as John the Baptist stressed, baptism with the Spirit. Hence it cannot be claimed with any assurance to-day that Jesus Christ instituted and commanded baptism with water as a rite to be observed by his disciples.

Nor can we feel assured that Jesus Christ instituted the Eucharist as a sacramental rite to be observed by all his disciples for all time. When we study the Synoptic Gospels in the light of modern textual criticism we find in them no command, 'This do in remembrance of me.' That command, interpolated into *Lk.* (xxii, 19), was no part of his original Gospel but is derived from St. Paul (*I Cor.* xi, 24). Hence there is no authority in the Synoptic Gospels for the perpetual celebration of the Eucharist by the disciples of Christ. In St. John's Gospel the Institution of the Eucharist is absent from the account of the Last Supper, and in its place we find the foot-washing of the disciples by Jesus, intended to teach the ideal of mutual service, however humble, as the cement of Christian fellowship. In *Jn.* vi we have the spiritualizing of the Eucharist, which would seem not to tie it down to any actual participation in bread and wine. Hence the necessity of an ordained ministry for sacramental

purposes cannot be maintained as of the *esse* of the Church, although if there be in any Church a ministry of good and wise men it may well be of the *bene esse* of that Church. It has been said that the best argument for episcopacy—and, we would add, the only argument for episcopacy which is really valid—is a good bishop, and this is true of all Church ministers of every grade. The Church possesses no essential organization and is bound to none.

> 'The Kingdom of Christ, not being a kingdom of this world, is not limited by the restrictions which fetter other societies, political or religious. It is in the fullest sense free, comprehensive, universal. . . . It has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and place alike are holy. Above all, it has no sacerdotal system. . . . This, then, is the Christian ideal: a holy season extending the whole year round—a temple confined only by the limits of the habitable world—a priesthood co-extensive with the human race' (*Essay on the Christian Ministry* by Bishop Lightfoot).

The fourth factor in Churchianity is *dogmatism*. Behind *dogmatism* stands the illusion of infallibility. The English Church professes no belief in ecclesiastical infallibility. This is clearly stated in Articles XIX and XXI, in which it is declared that all the great churches of Christendom have 'erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith,' and that General Councils 'may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God.'

Edmund Burke declared that the Church of England was a Church professing fallibility. What a magnificent tribute that is to her as a teacher of the Truth. How rightly it reflects that spirit of Christian humility which should characterize the Christian society as much as it ought to characterize the Christian individual. This spirit is as scientific as it is Christian, and is the proper preliminary possession of all the meek to whom God will reveal his secret. A Christian Church possessed of this spirit need not fear for its influence among modern-minded men and women. But a Church that asserts claims to infallibility which are disproved at the bar of reason, history, and personal experience must be prepared to decline in influence as the standard of modern education rises.

It is this claim to infallibility, with the claims to ecclesiastical authority which accompany it and the policy of intolerant obscurantism which ensues from it, which constituted, as Mark

Pattison pointed out, the most formidable objection of many thoughtful people to the Church of Rome.

> 'The one essential point of the Catholic system is the control of the individual conscience by an authority of law placed without it, and exercised over it by men assuming to speak in the name of Heaven.'

In pointing out the debilitating effects of ecclesiastical dogmatism we are not to be taken as asserting that the Church has no need to deliver clear teaching. Where dogmatism is wrong is in its conviction that it cannot be mistaken.

> 'I beseech you, in the bowels of our Lord, Jesus Christ, to conceive it possible that you may be mistaken,'

said Oliver Cromwell to a body of Puritan divines. This, the ecclesiastical dogmatist can never admit. On the other hand, the scientist is ever ready to revise his formulae in the light of new evidence, but the ecclesiastical dogmatist never. 'The dogmas of the Catholic Church are irreformable.' The modern world has no use for infallibility and dogmatism, but it has a profound belief in truth and in the spirit and method by which truth is secured. The Christian teacher, while humbly relying on the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit, will also carry most weight in the modern world if he makes use of the scientific method and emulates the scientific manner. Particularly will this be the case if he proclaims, not only the liberating power of truth—'Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free'—but also the need for freedom in the search for and apprehension of truth, even Christian truth—'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

A fine testimony to this point of view is borne by our leading anthropologist, Dr. R. R. Marett, in his recently published autobiography, *A Jerseyman at Oxford*:

> 'I hate the very notion of a theocracy as a peculiarly vicious type of despotism that would enslave not merely the temporal but likewise the spiritual life. The moment that society ventures to interpose its arbitrary decrees between me and my intellectual and moral conscience, I am ready to become a rebel, and to take the consequences. Free service for the sake of the good is, as I see it, the one and only condition of true progress—in religion, in morals, and in politics alike' (p. 329).

In criticizing Churchianity, we are not to be understood as maintaining that the Christian Church has not a right and useful

place in Christianity. Indeed, although the Christian individual can lead a Christian life without the Church, yet the Christian Religion cannot exercise either a permanent or extending influence over humanity without the Church. Whilst Christian history abounds with evils for which the Church is responsible, it also abounds in the record of benefits which the Church has conferred. When the Christian Church has attempted to become master instead of servant, to view itself as an end instead of a means—in other words, to exalt itself above measure, and misread the scale of Christian values — then it has become a source of weakness rather than of strength to the Christian Religion.

Again, in criticizing Churchianity we are not to be understood as maintaining that Christian ministries have not a right and useful place in Christianity. It is true that the Christian Religion teaches the priesthood of the laity, and that any Christian minister is a representative of this lay priesthood and is not a member of a distinctive sacred caste. Nevertheless, the Christian Religion has gained much by the services of Christian ministers wholly devoted to the propagation of that religion. With rare exceptions, the most influential Christians have been members of these ministries. A good example of this is seen in the case of our church reformers — John Wycliff, John Huss, John Knox, John Wesley, Savonarola, Martin Luther, F. D. Maurice were all priests. It is when Christian ministers forget that they are *servi servorum Dei* that the trouble begins.

Again, in criticizing Churchianity we are not to be understood as maintaining that the Sacraments of the Christian Church have not a rightful and useful place in the Christian life. They may not be essential to the Christian life of the individual Christian. We all come across many examples of this, especially if we happen to be acquainted with the Society of Friends. Moreover, sacraments may very easily, almost naturally, be used in a magical, materialistic, mechanical manner so as to be flagrantly detrimental to the true understanding and practice of the Christian Religion — although even here the *sancta simplicitas* of the individual Christian sacramentalist may do much to condone such misuse. Yet, rightly used, these symbols of Christian faith and experience can be, and often are, both inspiring and uplifting. Nevertheless, the spiritual character of

the Christian Religion demands rigorous care and economy in their use, for they become, if fanatically exalted, hot-beds of idolatry and superstition, especially if the attempt be made to enforce them on all Christians as 'necessary to salvation.' No Christian ought to regard as necessary to salvation what Jesus Christ did not command.

Again, in criticizing the dogmatism of Churchianity, we are not to be understood as maintaining that Christian teaching should be lacking in the note of authority and conviction, but that that authority must be shewn to find its true basis, not in traditional ecclesiastical dogmatic formularies treated as though they were infallible, but in the affirmations of the enlightened reason and tested Christian experience. 'This do and thou shalt live.'

It is not without significance that the second century *Epistle to Diognetus* which Bishop Lightfoot described as 'one of the noblest and most impressive of early Christian apologies in style and treatment,' when setting forth the qualities and characteristics of the wonderful new religion which was making such remarkable headway in the Roman Empire refers nowhere* either to the Church, or to the Ministry, or to the Sacraments. This omission is not due to their non-existence at this time — as a matter of fact we know that they did exist — but it is due to this primitive writer regarding them as not of primary importance for the true understanding of the Christian religion. They for him are not essentials as they are for the man who identifies Churchianity with Christianity.

* The Epistle proper ends with Chapter X. Chapters XI and XII, which curiously enough contain a reference to the Church, are not part of the original work.

THE CULTURAL PROBLEM AND THE BIBLE

By Professor Stanley Cook, Litt.D., F.B.A.

AMID the stress and strain of the day the discussion of post-war conditions and of the future of civilizaton goes steadily forward. Social, economic and other practical questions of the future become more urgent, and the strategy of the war and post-war planning are seen to be two parts of one fundamental problem. Writers debate the structure of the world after the war, and discuss the principles of social and national welfare. But when one speaks of the cultural problem one has mainly in view the intellectual, moral and spiritual values. These make for the worthy life of individuals, and distinguish them from the stalled and fatted beasts. It is the motivating spirit or soul of the social organism that is essential, and observation soon convinces one that there is a natural interrelation between the sort of organism or body and the sort of spirit or soul that is embodied.

But all debate is inconclusive and post-war planning futile if we ignore Comte's warning of a century ago. He pointed out that the world is governed and overturned by ideas; the social organism rests finally on opinions. Political and other crises are due to intellectual anarchy and divergence as regards fundamental maxims whose fixity is the first condition of a true social order, whereas men simply are not now in agreement upon general unifying ideas that would form a common, social doctrine. Comte's diagnosis of the ills of his day is not mere intellectualism : convictions of an ultimate rationality or irrationality, of the unconscious, of a supreme impersonal principle, or of God, are intellectually powerful, but their implications differ profoundly.

Comte's warning was never more insistently called for than to-day, when totalitarian methods rule, and *Gleichschaltung*, the regimentation of opinion and the forceful imposition from above of regulative ideas, testify to the assurance that the world

needs an effective harmony of life and thought. But what sort of harmony? This war is waged because man's liberty is being foully attacked. Totalitarianism is not merely inhuman; such terms as Demonism, Satanism and the advent of Anti-Christ indicate the intensity of our abhorrence. Yet when all has been said that should be said, the fact must be faced that totalitarianism does purport to go to the root of the world-crisis; and the more decisively one detests and rejects the Nazi conception of peace and order the more does it devolve upon us who oppose it to find the appropriate weapons of defence and offence. It is not enough to condemn evil; the very fact that certain dominant ideas could ever arise and prevail concerns very seriously our conceptions of human nature and evolution.

The cultural problem — which will be less *doctrinaire* and more practical when the war ceases — inevitably involves the question of the place of the Bible in western life. Since Green, the English historian, wrote we have been wont to hear that at the Reformation we became 'the people of a book, and that book was the Bible.' The Bible was felt to be true for individuals and for peoples; it was a unifying force, a driving power; it had a more than devotional value, and retrospect exposes the gulf between the Bible of to-day and what it has been. There is, to be sure, anxiety and readiness to encourage and spread the teaching of Scripture; but should we expect the Bible to recover the position it once held? For, on the one hand, those who treasure it for its devotional and spiritual value may deprecate the free secular use increasingly made of its contents in modern research. On the other hand, those who value the Bible on literary and humanist grounds, or as a unique source, may fear the return of a wave of narrow-minded obscurantism, or that battles for intellectual freedom may have to be fought over again.

The Bible is no longer 'true' in the way that once it was; it no longer explains itself, nor does the Church adequately explain it. It is the subject of collective but inadequately co-ordinated studies. It has become a book wherein to pick and choose, as in pre-Reformation days, when Luther could condemn Tetzel for proof-texts, grubbing 'like a sow with a bag of oats.' There is a vast cultural difference between that historical conception of the Bible as a whole which we associate with the Reformation

and our usual habit of rather miscellaneous selection, choosing for religious, ethical, sociological, archaeological, literary and other purposes. This is by no means to condemn the practice; it is to underline the fact that the spacious vision which the Bible presents — and which is so greatly enhanced when the Book is re-interpreted — is in danger of being overlooked and lost, and that too in these days when things are 'events' and the sciences encourage an historical conception of the universe of nature and man.

The cultural problem — one of no recent origin — has been aggravated by the Nazi conception of a new order. It is felt by us that no future order could justify the present brutality, deceit, and all else that horrify those who are outside Nazi influence. For the measures are not merely those of harsh 'military necessity'; war is regarded as politics in another form; war is to inaugurate the new order, and brutal measures are necessary, not only to introduce but also to maintain it. There can be no doubt that oppression and persecution will continue until Nazi Germany sees the prospect of a universal *Gleichschaltung*. We are confronted with a deliberate world-outlook for a parallel to which we have to go back and examine the 'false' religions of ancient Oriental peoples. For scope, aim and massiveness the Nazi ideology can be compared with the megalomaniac phases of another highly-gifted people—ancient Israel, with its phases of fanaticism and antinomian religiosity which the prophets of the Old Testament and the New did their best to check and sublimate. This comparison of Germany and Israel, which can usefully be pursued further, is one that has to be made if one is to grasp the inwardness of the cultural problem: the perverted idealism, the demonic ingenuity of a richly-endowed people, and the fateful and tragic difference between destructive fanaticism and constructive humanist and spiritual idealism.

The cultural problem is complicated by the serious differences among ourselves, among those who are vehemently and whole-heartedly opposed to the ruling German mentality. There are writers whose fundamental ideas imply or express a world-order incompatible with the Bible or, more generally, with ordinary religion. But the world's religions cannot be waved on one side. Science does not and cannot cast out fear; nor are

the causes that are often presumed to generate or encourage religion wholly banished by the most elaborate social structure as such. A more human attitude to the rank and file of one's 'weaker (?)' brethren, and a more serious and competent readiness to understand that the religious problem is with us, would make some writers less one-sided and our plans less divergent.

Moreover there are writers who entertain conceptions of man's place in and control over the universe which imply that his evolution is in his own hands — ideas that irresistibly recall the 'magical' beliefs collected by our anthropologists from among early and rudimentary peoples. But all this is no matter for wasteful controversy. The cultural problem is the concern of all who are in any way anxious to contribute to it, from scientists and publicists to biblical critics. But while there is unity in the country as regards the war, there is too little agreement touching the more imponderable difficulties, which though of long standing, have been immeasurably aggravated by the war and all its attendant circumstances.

The course of events influences thought and is in turn influenced by thought. Malthus on population influenced Darwin's study of the struggle for existence; and Karl Marx, after Hegel, read out of and into social and economic vicissitudes, principles that seem—to many—to illuminate the processes of nature and of human history alike. The introduction, maintenance and development of a new order is a matter of supreme cultural import, like the processes of evolution itself. How, indeed, are sweeping changes successfully made? Are all the factors known and in our hands? One speaks of Chance, Fate or Historical Necessity; 'some call it Evolution and others call it God.' How can we in this year of grace indulge seriously in far-reaching speculations on man, or on nature, or on both, unless the whole field from which our material has been isolated is competently and candidly interrogated? The brilliant grandeur of the aims —that of planning a new world-order—should not blind one to the immensity of a task that calls for mutual understanding and co-operation.

The Bible spans the universe from Creation to a New World; its vision is now placed in the frame of modern knowledge. Such names as Ur and Babylon, Tutankhamen and

Nefertiti, Crete and Greece link popular imagination and biblical research. No doubt India and China, not to speak of Mexico and Peru, go to fill the canvas of human history; but a single stream with many tributaries unite Palestine, Greece and Rome with our world to-day. Thus the history of man in general and the special line of development that concerns ourselves are combined; and it is the latter alone that displays in high relief certain great cultural turning-points in the past that give added significance to the changes amid which we live. Vividly one realizes facts of decline and revival, of rebirth and decay. Any given stage in the line is but one of others; and although every age is in some degree transitional, there are certain outstanding landmarks, crises that are the climax of lesser crises. At such times not religion alone is involved; the outlook has been, not so much social or political as cosmic, and the cosmic outlook, uniting God and nature and man, combined what to-day concerns religion, science and the humanities. The new stage is conditioned by the earlier cultural stages and gives rise to a new series, and religion becomes part of the ordinary culture, and is natural and realistic in a way that would seem almost incomprehensible to us now. In fine, the critically ascertained course of cultural evolution transcends the humanistic and scientific outlooks by embracing and incorporating those developments that have directly or indirectly led to the increasing richness of the human mind in all its scientific and other aspects.

The cultural problem unavoidably involves our treatment of the Bible. (1) The simplest religious teaching step by step raises complex questions of theology and philosophy, and sooner or later the young mind goes out into the world unready and unequipped for the medley of diverse outlooks that confront it. (2) Many different lines of research unite the Bible with secular history, archaeology, psychology, etc., and not rarely appear to injure the uniqueness of the Bible and its spiritual value: religious and non-religious questions are intertwined. And (3) the Bible as a source contributes uniquely to matters that are of general cultural value: convictions of choice and destiny, of liberty and control, forms of 'good' and of 'bad' religion, Führers or Messiahs 'true' or 'false.' It illuminates the nature of mental development and the extremest ranges of the human

psyche. It cannot be kept in a separate compartment; the world of culture would be disastrously maimed without it, and yet—what will be the place of the Bible in the future? It is too precious a heritage not to be used to the full; and I for one rise from a life-long study of it with the conviction that it is so interwoven with all that is valuable in life and thought that it might even become a cultural force more profoundly than ever before. But it brings a tremendous problem, raising as it does questions of delicacy, taste and religious susceptibilities. This, however, is no excuse for shelving the task; and it may be that the tolerant, practical and humanistic Anglo-Saxon and American mentality in this present age of upheaval—and Renaissance—may set its stamp upon the progressive development of culture even as Hebrews, Greeks and Romans have done in the past.

CHURCH SERVICE REFORM:

A LAYMAN'S PLEA

By the Hon. Gilbert Coleridge.

> 'Whatever profession we make, to whatever outward worship we conform, if we are not fully satisfied in our own mind that the one is true, and the other well pleasing to God, such profession and practice, far from being any furtherance, are indeed great obstacles to our salvation.'

THUS wrote John Locke in his famous essay on Toleration. Much has happened since those words were penned, but they remain applicable to the present day. Are we satisfied that the professions that we make in church are true, or that the services to which we conform are well pleasing to God? Our Book of Common Prayer is full of the noblest language the English tongue can produce: that I suppose no one will gainsay, but how is it rendered to us in public worship?

I have had the chance recently of attending other churches than my own, and of talking to many laymen on the subject who agree with me that rarely are the prayers read as they should be, plainly, reverently, and with a moving spirit of devotion. Sometimes they are inaudible, sometimes they are hastened through

in a gabble, at others they are unspeakably monotonous, like the mumbled Masses of our Papal brethren; but in most cases the impression is conveyed that the speaker is thinking of something else. The prayers seem a part of the service which has simply to be got through. A remedy would be for the Bishops flatly to refuse to ordain any man to the ministry who has not passed a severe test in elocution. After all, the principal part of a clergyman's profession is speaking to his fellow-men. Some of the clergy adopt a precise, pedantic diction — that parsonic utterance so ably represented on the stage — but this mode of speech, when carried into church, hardly makes the prayers intelligible.

Neither does intonation. While conceding that intoning the prayers is more suitable to a choral service in a cathedral, or in a large church where the sustained note carries the sound better than an inflected speech, as it is impossible to drop the voice at the end of a sentence, it is surely out of place in small congregations where the aim is that the reader should be *en rapport* with his people.

The Scottish practice can give us a lead here. Although extempore praying has its weakness in that it tends to degenerate, in the mouth of a minister deficient in imagination, into set phrases inferior to our Liturgy, yet the mind of the speaker is at least set on what he is saying, and he has the golden opportunity, if he has the power of moulding his thoughts, of carrying his hearers with him in the true spirit of prayer. In the mouth of a capable and eloquent man a prayer may become a prose poem, the fittest act of creation to lay at the feet of Almighty God. And therefore I suggest that an occasional extempore prayer should be allowed in our services: it would offer more scope for a man to lead his brethren in the act of prayer, and it would widen the possibility of greater spiritual union between the parson and his flock.

And now as to our public worship as laid down in the Prayer Book. No one with any literary sense would dream of making any drastic emendations to the text: a very few alterations would be sufficient to bring it into line with modern ideas. Take reiteration for example. We are enjoined by Holy Writ to avoid 'vain repetition,' and yet we repeat the Lord's Prayer twice at

Morning Prayer, twice at Evening Prayer, once in the Litany which is often added to Morning Prayer, and twice in the Communion Service, so that a worshipper who stays for the latter service repeats it at least four times! We rob this noble prayer, taught us by our Saviour, of its appeal by this senseless repetition; moreover the very familiarity of the words takes away the urgency of its appeal to the mind. Can we not be satisfied by saying this prayer but once in each service? When we ask God to have mercy on us, will our prayers become more efficacious by calling 'Lord' and 'Christ' in consecutive responses? And when we ask him to 'deliver us,' and 'beseech him to hear us' so many times, do our minds follow the words to the twenty-first repetition, or does it tend to become purely mechanical? The more mechanical our prayers, the less soul there is in them, and the more they lead to inattention. The Litany would be just as beautiful a form of prayer without the constant repetitions.

The *Venite* is a lovely psalm, but it is utterly marred by the note of hatred and revenge contained in the last four verses. We Christians are told that our Father is a God of infinite forgiveness, and yet we sing every Sunday morning — if we do not use the Deposited Book, in which the *Venite* is shortened — that there is no rest for the wicked: 'Unto whom I sware in my wrath; that they should not enter into my rest. Glory be,' etc. Note the triumph of the Doxology! We may have every good reason for hating our national foes at the present time, but if we went so far as to hope that they should *never* be forgiven for their bestial cruelty, we should not be followers of Christ. And so I suggest that the last four verses of this otherwise beautiful canticle should *always* be omitted, and then it would end on a loving note, 'For he is the Lord our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.' We might then sing 'Glory be' with a good conscience.

And now as regards the Lessons. Though the latest Lectionary allows a wider freedom of choice than the old Lectionary, nevertheless are the selections from the Old Testament the wisest that can possibly be made? I suppose that no selection could be perfect, but I take it that the object should be to help one's conduct in life. Granted that the Lectionary contains many passages germane to that end, ringing challenges to the

conscience, pieces of sublime poetry, pithy thoughts from ancient philosophy, historical narratives full of meaning to the thoughtful mind, but ever and anon the jealous God is obtruded, the primitive Jahweh, moody and vengeful, prescribing the awful fate of those who worship other gods, and enforcing a point of view discarded by the advance of modern thought. Some selections are quite revolting to the present generation. Two examples will suffice. True it is that our Communion Service is the Christian continuation of the ancient Jewish Passover, and that Easter Day is one of the special occasions for us and our brethren to come to Communion, but is it necessary that on the day on which we commemorate the resurrection of Christ we should be treated to all the sanguinary and minute details of the Jewish sacrifice? Are there no passages in the Old Testament more appropriate to the day than the bald recital of this ancient and somewhat savage rite? Surely our philosophy of life has progressed beyond insisting on the efficacy of sprinkling blood on door-posts.

Again, I have often wondered at the mentality of the divines who appointed the story of Jael to be read in church on a Sunday morning. A more brutal story of deliberate treachery and murder cannot be imagined, nor one less suited to a Christian congregation, and there are hosts of other passages utterly incompatible with modern thought. Many of the narratives in the *Kings* and *Chronicles* are picturesque and historical, but carry little moral value. We may be thankful for so many extracts from the *Apocrypha*, but we might surely have more which would be most useful as guides to life.

Again, many of the Epistles of St. Paul are too obscure for the average man, and too philosophical in language to be understood by, shall we say, a country congregation. For instance, the references to St. Paul's controversy concerning the throwing over of the Jewish rite of circumcision, though historically interesting, is no help to life, as it only shews the importance in his day of rescuing the early Church from being a merely Jewish sect. Is there any reason for commemorating the Circumcision at all except the mere fact that Christ was born a Jew, and conformed to the Jewish rite, which is a question of ritual containing no moral value?

Touching the vexed question of the Creeds I am aware that I am treading on very controversial ground. Many say that if you tamper with them you are introducing the thin end of the wedge which will bring the whole structure of faith to the ground, till we are left with Mr. Wells' creed, 'I believe rather indistinctly in God the Father Almighty.' But this is not so. Can we not discard some of the affirmations which create difficulties in the minds of any whole-hearted Christians without destroying the unity of the Church? The belief in a miraculous conception, never claimed by Jesus, who so often referred to himself as the Son of Man, does not necessarily strengthen the faith of a Christian: other faiths have been fortified by the belief in a miraculous birth.

The Athanasian Creed, with its incomprehensibilities and final curse on the heretic, is tacitly ignored, or sung on the ground, I suppose, that singing is thought to be not so binding as a recital; but the Apostles' Creed is still a stumbling-block to many would-be Churchmen, and especially to those who are asked to be godparents. At an ordinary service one can be silent over the clauses to which one does not subscribe, but to stand up at a christening and publicly say, 'All this I steadfastly believe,' is putting too much strain on an honest man. The omission of the Creed from the admirable Revised Service of Infant Baptism, published in the September issue of the *Modern Churchman*, is most desirable. In Scotland they do not recite a Creed at every service, yet Presbyterians are not less Christian than our Churchmen. At least if the Creeds were not expunged from our services, an alternative act of faith should be allowed. More than one have been suggested by the Modern Churchman's Union, notably that by the late Dr. Douglas White, but it is doubtful whether the Church authorities would sanction this free treatment of traditional dogmas. But if our Church is ever to become so universal as to enfold the men and women in the by-way and hedges of life, dogmatic statements containing the germs of theological controversy must be omitted, and not enforced as the only passports to the ministry and to heaven. Above all they must not be presented to the plain man in the street as the exclusive tenets of the Christian faith. It is the life of Jesus and his teaching that should be insisted on, and not the

profound philosophical concepts of the Trinity and the Incarnation. As that wise man Benjamin Jowett said,

> 'People must believe more strongly in a few truths, which we all acknowledge, and they must apply these more vigorously.'

Many good Christian men—men who might have done wonders in the fold—have been deterred from joining the ministry because of the rigid insistence on credal formulae. They have probably felt as Carlyle said,

> 'What the light of your mind pronounces incredible, that, in God's name, leave uncredited—at your peril do not force yourself to believe that.'

Let us therefore not be fearful lest the discarding of some tenets of our Creeds, though faithfully cherished for many generations, but which have no direct influence on our lives in helping us to eschew evil and to do good, will weaken the Church and make us less Christian. It may, and I believe will, strengthen our system and establish bonds of union with many men and women of goodwill at present outside the pale. That is one of the aims of modernists, and I am satisfied that, even if some of the reforms which I have indicated here were carried into effect, the Church's arm would be lengthened to embrace many of our fellow-Christians. There was a fight over the last attempt at Liturgical Reform, and there will be a tough struggle over the next, for we English are slow to adopt changes in our accustomed forms of worship; but this war is having the effect of making us face realities. If we succeed in making our services more real, we shall not find the Bishop of Chelmsford complaining of empty churches. In any case, to quote John Buchan,

> 'Our peril is indifference, and that is a grave peril, for rust will crumble a metal when hammer blows will only harden it.'

BOOK REVIEWS

THE BIBLE FOR TO-DAY*

Year by year the annual report of the Bible Society reminds us that the Scriptures are still the universal 'best seller.' If we pause to ask ourselves why that should be so, a little consideration shows that it is not for the most obvious reasons. The Bible is not an easy book to understand. All of

* *The Bible for To-day.* Edited by John Stirling and illustrated by Rowland Hilder and others. Oxford University Press. pp. 1,255. Price 21/-, 30/- and 42/-. 1941.

it has to do with the remote past, with a civilization for the most part Oriental, and set against a historical background about which nine-tenths of its readers can have only the vaguest notions. True, it may be said that its message, in spite of the pause of time and the change of scene, speaks straight to the heart of the modern man or woman or even child who comes to it seeking for light and guidance. But that much of the message fails to get across must be obvious to anyone who, though as a child he was thrilled by the exploits of Samson and David, was also bewildered and confused by the Old Testament prophetic books. No doubt it is all a matter of perspective. But perspective does not 'come natural' from the beginning, as anyone knows who has watched a child drawing, or who has studied the history of art. It is possible, in reading as well as in drawing, to ignore the third dimension. A guide and a teacher are needed to fit Samson and David into their historical and religious setting, and to see in the bewildering oracles of the prophets the highest point of the divine revelation to Israel. For that process of revelation and discovery moving hand-in-hand is not obvious on the surface when priestly editors have done their perfect work.

Again, no one could pretend that, as usually printed and bound, the Bible is an attractive volume. Convention has decided that outwardly the Scriptures should present a funereal aspect. And within the print is all too often a strain on the eye. The verse-division of the Authorised Version (which after all is the edition usually bought and presented), though convenient for reference, often cuts across the sense, and makes no distinction between poetry and prose, paragraph and stanza. Nor can it be argued that the headings which stand over each column in the Authorised Version give much help in the understanding of what lies beneath. And finally, if by chance a Bible is embellished with illustrations, they are either of a weakly sentimental type, or else minute reproductions of Italian Renaissance masterpieces which, though in keeping with the piety of their period and of great artistic value, are not the best pictorial aid to the understanding of the text and its implications.

It is to meet the needs of the non-theological — and often, from the ecclesiastical point of view, non-attached — reader of to-day that this edition of the Sacred Text has been produced. A brief description will give some idea of its scope.

The whole of the Authorised Version is printed on large pages of double columns in clear type properly laid out as prose or verse, and divided into paragraphs, each of which has a terse sub-heading. Each main section and Book has an introduction which is concerned not only with the historical and religious background of its own times, but more especially with its message for the world of to-day and the people who live in it. The same approach is seen in the illustrations, of which there are more than two hundred. For the most part they are not 'Bible pictures' in the accepted sense of the phrase,

but a pictorial commentary on the text in terms of the modern scene and modern civilization.

Any attempt to produce an edition of the Bible on these lines is beset by many pitfalls. These are not so much of a theological kind. The danger rather is one of offending conventional taste in religious matters. To some it will seem that the whole thing is too journalistic, both in its comments and illustrations. It will not be without surprise, accompanied in some cases by unfavourable criticism, that many will come upon, for example, a picture of a modern 'panzer unit' moving through the streets of a modern city. But at the same time the likelihood is that an illustration of this kind will do far more than any 'historical' picture, however exact its archaeological details, to bring home to the reader not versed in ancient history the menace of Assyria — which after all was not very different from the menace which confronts the smaller countries to-day — and the urgency of Isaiah's message, not only as it concerned the people of his own times, but as it concerns us now. In the nature of things it is not to be expected that the method 'comes off' every time, and the topical treatment is likely to date rather badly. Those who are fortunate enough to possess a detailed historical and theological acquaintance with the Biblical documents may find the illustrations and comments sometimes a little obvious, perhaps, and sometimes not expressed in quite the manner that they themselves would have chosen. But this edition is not for people of that kind, any more than its aim is archaeological or, in the narrow sense of the word, theological. Rather is it an attempt to present the Bible in its real setting—that of human experience in relation to the ever-changing and yet ever-similar problems and situations, hopes and fears of men and women of any and every age. Bearing in mind this and the class of readers for which it is intended, *The Bible for To-day* is a bold undertaking which deserves to be successful. If it could be produced at a price within reach of those who would most benefit by it, success should be assured.

A. W. Adams.

JOB'S COMFORTERS

Job was passing through a bad time. The author of the drama which bears his name portrays his sufferings with the rich fertility of an Oriental imagination. He had lost his family, his possessions, and the regard of his fellows. Bildad the Shuhite is deeply shocked at Job's determination to maintain the hard core of integrity which, in spite of all misfortunes, lay at the heart of his consciousness. 'Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?' he asks. Canon Cockin, in the first of a collection of papers by various authors dealing with the Christian interpretation of our present tragic situation,[1] aligns himself with Bildad. 'The war is God's

[1] *This War and Christian Ethics.* A Symposium edited by Ashley Sampson. Basil Blackwell. 1940. Price 6/- net.

judgment on man. It is the exposure to man of where he stands, of the state to which he has reduced himself by his deliberate attempt to do without God.'

Both Bildad and Canon Cockin are right up to a point. Canon Cockin wisely makes some necessary reservations which Bildad does not make, though he does infer from the fact that God's judgment is just that it is also 'strictly and precisely discriminating.' Broadly speaking it is true, as Canon Cockin says, that wrongdoing brings disaster. It is, however, as Job well knew, illegitimate to infer the converse, and to assume that disaster necessarily implies previous wrongdoing. Canon Cockin admits that the disaster may not follow the wrongdoing immediately, and may not fall on the individual wrongdoer 'with exact precision.' This is not consistent with his statement that God's judgment is 'strictly and precisely discriminating.' And it is at best a gross understatement. It is simply not true that, in this world at any rate, suffering can, in the long or in the short run, be correlated with the wrongdoing of the sufferer. It is not true, for instance, that the scourge of malignant disease falls with any kind of precision, exact or otherwise, on evil-doers.

The interpretation of the present war as an act of divine retributory justice is spiritually and morally dangerous. It blurs the distinction between the degrees of responsibility of the various belligerents. We have no business to speak, as Canon Cockin does, of retributory justice in this connection, unless our minds are clear on the matter of desert. Is the war God's judgment on Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Norway in the same degree as it is judgment on Germany, on Greece equally with Italy? Are victim and aggressor, without distinction, under the wrath of God? Canon Cockin would not go as far as this. He admits that 'there are degrees of culpability. There are depths of vileness to which some have descended and some have not.' But this does not put it nearly strongly enough. It is not enough to say that Norway has not descended to the same depths of vileness as Hitler's and Goebbels' Germany. It is not enough to say that Greeks are not culpable to the same degree as Mussolini and his gangsters. So gross an understatement amounts to mis-statement. The fact is that clear-cut questions of right and wrong are involved in the present struggle. The theologian who in effect irons out or minimises the distinction is not serving the cause of religion, nor is he maintaining, as he ought to do, the elementary standards of morality.

Another writer in the same volume, Rev. N. W. Pettinger, of the General Theological Seminary, New York, in the course of a paper on prayer in wartime, a paper which contains a number of fine thoughts finely expressed, shies away from the notion of praying for victory, partly on the ground that 'we are all of us involved in sin, and that it is dubious indeed to claim that our cause is totally good.' Of course we are all involved in sin, and he

would be a rash man who claimed that any cause, however noble, is 'totally good.' But, if it is right to strive for victory, it is right to pray for the success of our efforts. The objection to prayer for victory would, if valid, be fatal to many other kinds of prayer. Mr. Edwyn Bevan, in the course of a book on Christianity and War,[2] makes short work of this scruple:

> 'If the victory of a just cause is really a good, then it would be included among the good things for which it is reasonable to pray . . . In the case of victory, the cause which we believe to be the just cause may not really be just; or, if we are right in believing it to be just, it may come within God's design to allow the evil cause on this occasion to triumph. But if we are not going to pray for what we believe to be good, because we may be mistaken in believing it to be good, then we can never pray for anything.'

Dr. Lofthouse, who contributes a lucid and forceful paper to *This War and Christian Ethics,* has no doubt about the moral issues at stake in the war:

> 'What of war,' he asks, 'against a monstrous power whose avowed and unblushing aim is the conquest and enslavement of the whole world, which makes use of trickery and lies and terror without scruple, and which has exalted hatred and torture, murder and blasphemy, into a Satanic religion? It is astonishing to observe the number of passages in the *Book of Revelation* which might have been written with the present ruler of Germany in mind.'

Here, at any rate, there is no blurring of moral issues in the interests of an *a priori* theological scheme. Even a pacifist, who has a glimpse of what Dr. Lofthouse sees so clearly and expresses so vigorously, may unwittingly find himself praying for victory. A distinguished Christian pacifist, asked whether he would like Hitler to win the war, replied with a fervent 'God forbid!' This ejaculatory and no doubt heartfelt prayer may conceivably have been no more than a prayer for a stalemate. We think not.

It was the fashion, a few years ago, for novelists to make great play with Freudian psychology. Some of them may have been good novelists; some of them may have had an adequate knowledge of psychology; a few may have been at the same time good psychologists and good novelists. The fashion, however, has now passed, and all, or nearly all, the novels written under its influence are dead as mutton. The science of economics has a similar fascination for some of our contemporary theologians. They elevate Karl Marx to a place in their canon among the major prophets and assign him a position not much below Jeremiah. Not all of them show any special competence as economists, whatever we may think of them as theologians. In their writings the economic dwarfs other factors. Some of the papers in *This War and Christian Ethics* have not escaped the infection. Canon

[2] *Christians in a World at War.* By Edwyn Bevan. Student Christian Movement Press. 1940. Price 6/- net.

Cockin, for instance, believes that the war is largely God's judgment on the economic injustice of modern society. He sees this kind of injustice everywhere. He sees it in the administration of the Church. It is now only a short step to the proposition that 'this judgment of God is a judgment upon her [the Church's] own internal life, upon her sin and failure in precisely that sphere of economic justice.' Canon Cockin does not say whether by the Church he means the Church of England or, for example, the Methodist Church, or the Churches as a whole, nor does he say whether his animadversions apply also to the Continental Churches. So far as he has the Church of England in mind, it is a fantastic distortion of perspective to interpret the massacre of hostages in France, the ravaging of Poland, and all the other ghastly manifestations of neo-barbarism, as a divine judgment on the Fatal Opulence of Bishops or the maldistribution of parochial endowments.

'La Prusse a produit une seule idée: la guerre,' wrote Montesquieu in the eighteenth century. 'Even to this day,' confesses Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf,* 'I am not ashamed to say that, in a transport of enthusiasm, I sank on my knees and thanked heaven with an overflowing heart.' It was *'la guerre'* which moved him to the transport of enthusiasm. It was for the outbreak of war in 1914 that his heart overflowed with gratitude. The mystic worship of power for its own intoxicating self was characteristic of the *Wandervögel* movement early in the present century. The *Free German Youth Movement,* under the tutelage of such men as Stephan George, was the seed-ground from which sprang the later Nazi movement.

'Heute gehört uns Deutschland,
Morgen die ganze Welt.'

To these words modern Nazi youth marches onward. They express an aggressive spirit which goes back a long way, and is certainly not patient of any economic interpretation. Economics do not provide a key which will unlock any and every door.

It is perhaps pardonable in theologians who belong to a nation which, however unfairly, has been dubbed a nation of shop-keepers, that they should be disposed to overstress the economic factor in world affairs, and, in particular, in their analysis of the causes of the outbreak of the present war. Referring to the war of 1914-18, Rev. F. H. A. Micklewright, who contributes an able and persuasive paper on the Brotherhood of Man to *This War and Christian Ethics,* writes:

> 'The historical judgment must be that a measure of blame for war lies upon both sides and that neither side was willing to set aside national economic interests in order to secure the peace of Europe. In this sense, the war-guilt will continue until such problems of world-markets and of poverty in the midst of plenty are solved.'

This is a neat judgment, altogether too neat in view of the complexity of the causes of the war of 1914-18. Neat judgments are usually superficial. Mr.

Micklewright appends a footnote which is assuredly superficial. 'The Kaiser's government,' he writes, 'collapsed in 1918, and a democratic German government held out the hand of friendship. Yet the victorious allies kept a naval blockade on Germany for another seven months, a cause of starvation and destitution among the German people.' The picture of a democratic German government holding out the hand of friendship will impress only the kind of person who is vulnerable to German propaganda. The real power behind the republican *façade* was the old bureaucracy instinct with anti-democratic traditions. The republican leaders leaned so heavily for support on army leaders, who were the last people to wish either to maintain or to develop democracy, that, as events repeatedly proved, they were in the last resort in their pockets. It is true, as Mr. Arnold-Foster points out, that the *apparatus* of the blockade was maintained until the conclusion of the Peace Treaty. As Mr. Arnold-Foster was a member of the Blockade Section of the Supreme Economic Council, he knows what he is talking about. He points out that it is also true that prior to the signature of the Peace Treaty 779,000 tons of miscellaneous supplies had been delivered to the Germans. In this connection it is also worthy of note that such delay as there was in relieving the starvation and destitution of the Germans was largely their own fault. They had sunk a proportion of the world's shipping tonnage by their submarines so substantial that world trade had become difficult. Yet at first they stubbornly refused to release the million tons of their own shipping which was safely ensconced in their own ports and which could have been used to import the food of which they were in need.

Some of the contributors to *This War and Christian Ethics,* are infected with the Neo-Calvinism which is the understandable concomitant of a time of troubles. But between the Natural Theology of the eighteenth century and what the Bishop of Truro calls the Unnatural Theology of the Barthians stands the constructive theology of Liberalism. Those who have been swept out of its stream in these stormy days have lost much. There is indeed a real danger that the Irrationalism of racial and nationalistic mysticism may evoke by reaction a corresponding religious and theological Irrationalism. But, happily, not all the contributors have sought refuge in the *fin de siècle* Desperado Theology.

The theologian who concerns himself with world affairs is apt to approach them from a doctrinaire angle. Not so an observer such as Mr. Rom Landau, who has the advantage of intimate knowledge of Continental life and has made personal contact with some of the leading figures in the contemporary world drama. In his latest book [3] he tells us what he has seen. He has seen something which is very evil.

He saw Hitler in the days before he had secured supreme power. He saw Göring and behind his fat *bonhomie* he perceived a ruthless animal

[3] *We have seen Evil.* By Rom Landau. Faber & Faber Ltd. 1941. Price 7/6 net.

brutality. He saw Göbbels, 'his large head jerking on a long thin neck, his rugged features tense,' and on his countenance he noted the stamp of fanaticism. These men he met in an ante-room prior to a meeting at which Hitler addressed a vast gathering of his followers. Hitler himself was the least conspicuous figure present. He exuded a charm almost feminine in its appeal. At the same time he appeared somewhat self-conscious and *gauche,* 'in fact, rather the pleasant young man from the shop next door, whom in a rash moment you had asked to tea, and whom you now pitied even more than you had done when facing him behind the counter.'

But when, shortly after, Hitler stood on the platform facing his adherents there was a transformation which filled Mr. Landau with horror, amazement and disgust. The body stiffened; the facial muscles tautened; the voice became harsh and frenzied; most striking of all, the eyes changed in appearance:

> 'They seemed to have become bigger, especially the white around the pupil. This enlarged white background gave them a staring, hypnotic, and almost demented expression. There was an icyness in them that could come from fanatical hatred only. They hardly seemed the eyes of a human being. This transformation gave me a sort of shudder—as if I were watching a man who had ceased to be himself and was possessed by some alien spirit.'

The Führer's appeal was calculated to elicit a response rather from the listener's solar plexus than from his brain. He reduced his audience to the condition of mesmerised mice or electrified robots.

> 'Some sinister force had taken hold of them, bearing them forward towards a goal, compelling and magnetic, yet lost completely in a veiled unknown. Humanity had fled from the vast hall with its steel girders and walls of concrete, as if it could no longer breathe in this uplifting rush of darker powers.'

At length Mr. Landau could bear it no longer and escaped. He was convinced that he had literally been in the presence of a superhuman evil power which had Hitler in its thrall and through him was dominating, dehumanizing and bestializing the vast audience. That was one of the things he saw in Germany, and he accounted it a very evil thing.

Mr. Landau believes in the reality of demoniac possession, and he interprets what he saw in the light of his belief. Even if the reader does not agree with him on this point, he may well appreciate his ethical lucidity. At any rate, his moral judgment is not befogged by irrelevant platitudes about our common involvement in sin. There is a light that lighteth every man coming into the world. It is the light of the moral consciousness, and it is by humbly but faithfully following this light that the Christian man will learn something of the nature of the divine judgment. In that light he will see the horrors of the concentration camp, the brutalities practised on the

inhabitants of occupied countries, the cold, deliberate *Shrechlichkeit* which Hitler and his friends have raised to a high degree of precision. And, if he is half a man, he will be moved to generous indignation. Nor will his indignation be blunted by general theories of a divine *omnibus* judgment which condemns persecutor and persecuted, aggressor and victim alike.

Mr. Landau finds in the period of the Weimar Republic an environment which stimulated the emergence of a mediumistic Führer. Though the observer who lacks Mr. Landau's first-hand knowledge of the conditions which prevailed may not be able to see anything beyond a democratic government whose right hand of friendship was harshly rejected by other governments, Mr. Landau says bluntly that 'those who thought in terms of a sane national reconstruction were a small minority.' The whole of Germany was riddled by psychic charlatanism.

> 'Germany, and especially Berlin and Munich, abounded in "psychic" societies, lectures, magazines, study-groups, fortune-tellers, astrologers and cheiromancers, cheirographists, physiognomists, phrenologists, hypnotists and mediums. Communication with the "other side" was almost as common as that with a friend next door.'

But it was not only in the psychic underworld that men sought after sensation. They often found their goal in drink or in sexual excesses. It was in this environment that National Socialism came into being. It was in such ground that it had its roots. It is therefore not remarkable that it has borne the poison fruits which we know only too well.

The value of Mr. Landau's book lies in his first-hand knowledge of his subject-matter, the brilliance of his pen-pictures, and last, but by no means least, in the clarity of his moral insight.

Mr. Bevan gives short shrift to our modern Bildads. In his *Christians in a World at War,* after remarking that Christians are no longer troubled by the problem of Job because they no longer expect to see a correspondence between well-doing and prosperity in the life of the individual, he adds that, oddly enough, some of them stick to the Old Testament view in the case of nations.

> 'This,' he says, 'is partly due no doubt in England to the extent to which the Old Testament was applied in Puritanism and Evangelicalism to the contemporary world . . . It is no more incredible that a just God should allow a righteous nation to come to grief than that a just God should allow a righteous man to come to grief.'

As to the question of the war, he has no patience with the 'critics of the Church who seem to think that it is sometimes right for men to engage in war, all that the Church should do for them is to wring its hands and lament over them and say that it is all horrible.'

He ends his book by striking the authentic note of Christian hope, determination and courage:

'Christians,' he says, 'should go to meet the coming days, whatever they may be, without fear. They can do their part strenuously in this troubled world just because the anchor of their hope is in another world, "within the veil," and they know that the ultimate future, whether beyond this sphere of things or here on earth as well, will bring full satisfaction to those who desire to see "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ."'

G. L. H. Harvey.

SUPREME GOVERNOR*

Mr. Thompson has given us a solid and valuable piece of historical work. Moreover, it is as interestingly as it is clearly presented. He frankly admits the political character of the Elizabethan settlement. Nor does he minimise the sordidness of some of the factors that had to be considered. He speaks of 'that influential class whose wealth was closely linked with the spoils of the Reformation—men who were Protestant by virtue of their property and propertied by virtue of their Protestantism.' 'This pecuniary greed . . .' our author holds, 'provides the ground on which the Church Settlement of Elizabeth can most justly be criticised.' It was in consequence of this that 'the established religion was presented so unworthily to those ordinary folk who were most in need of edification.' But Elizabeth herself he justifies in caring 'more for the safety of her country than for the detailed issues of theological controversy.' Whether the fact that the 'formularies took shape under influences in great measure political hindered the spiritual development of the Church . . .' is a debatable question.

Mr. Thompson handles judicially the struggle against 'the Romanist menace,' with its accompanying tragedies, particularly that of Campion. He expounds too with admirable perspicuity the various shades of Puritanism. He exhibits a high admiration for Hooker, while not glossing over his excessive authoritarianism and his failure to do justice to the conscientious convictions of individuals. Hooker, he insists, provided a needed rationalisation for the 'opportunist' improvisations of the Queen. Hence 'the unpromising liaison between political necessity and monarchical pride was seen to have produced an offspring which represented no passing and empty statement of religious values.'

Mr. Thompson is not, however, so successful in handling theological niceties as he is on strictly historical issues. It is daring indeed to speak of 'a doctrinal position which, in so far as it was defined at all, was mainly Zwinglian.' 'Pronouncedly Virtualist' would have been nearer the mark—a Virtualism previously formulated by Ridley, and subsequently fixed by Hooker and by him handed down to form the basis of the Laudian and later Caroline schools.

N. E. Egerton Swann.

* *A Study of Elizabethan Ecclesiastical Policy and Circumstance*, by J. V. O. Thompson. (S.P.C.K. 6/- net. 1941.)

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

SOVIET SECULARISM AND CHRISTIAN OBSCURANTISM.

SIR,

Your editorial note in the November number of the *Modern Churchman* (pp. 337-340) on Soviet secularism and Christian obscurantism makes no reference to the intellectual bases of these attitudes, presumably because an intellectual synthesis between Materialism and Idealism is not practical politics. I hold that it is, that I have shown that it is in my published works — *The Appearance of Mind* (1923) and *Novius Organum* (1931), Longmans — and that it is only the presupposition which I have just attributed to you, Sir, that has prevented my readers from accepting a position that is as simple as it is intellectually revolutionary.

My new assumption is that 'things' act according to the habit of their kind. This axiom can be read, for living things, straight off the facts of life when they are not interpreted mechanistically, and one can define 'material bodies' as things that exhibit the gravitative habit without prejudice to anything that is true in mechanics. Material things are real, but the 'matter' of mechanics is a convenient fiction — though its convenience as a fiction is at present somewhat prejudiced by the failure of physicists to recognize it as such. Similarly, sentient organisms are real, but their 'minds' are the convenient fictions of psychologists, as also, of course, of plain men and of everyday life. I need say nothing, I think, about the troubles of the last 3,000 years or so arising from taking the 'mind' for a reality! As regards my view of human, rational, spiritual ('sapient'?) life, I may quote from Dr. W. R. Matthews's review of *Novius Organum* in *The Church of England Newspaper*: 'We find that Mr. McKerrow has been led, in spite of his denial of the reality of finite mind, to a position practically identical with Christian Theism.'

The pretensions of the more sophisticated understanding are as false as those which we all now see through as 'naïve realism.' The 'scientific world' is as unreal as the 'sensible world.' All 'things' are sheer mysteries, not less mysterious when they are familiar to our senses and our understandings. 'Thing' is, indeed, the basic misinterpretation — 'things' are systems of activity and all are manifestations of One Activity.

My view will prevail, no doubt, if it be true. But will it prevail on this side or on the far side of a Dark Age for Christian civilization? The doubt is my excuse for trying to attract some attention to my opinions — now, now!

J. C. McKERROW.

34 Cartwright Gardens,
London, W.C.1.
November 21, 1941.

[We did not attempt an intellectual synthesis between Marxian Materialism and Christian Theism — such a synthesis is beyond our capacity — but of course we do not deny that it is impossible, or that our correspondent may have achieved it. Our concern, in the Editorial referred to, was to secure a better understanding and so closer co-operation between Bol-

shevists and Christians. That, it seems to us, can se secured in increasing measure by both parties cultivating reverence for Freedom and reverence for Truth because the welfare of humanity and all sound progress demand such reverence. Agreement in metaphysical theories, scientific hypotheses, historical critical conclusions, is highly desirable for human peace of mind. Whether it is really desirable in the interests of human evolution is another issue. However, at present, such agreement does seem to us to be outside the sphere of practical politics. Mr. McKerrow is right in charging us with this viewpoint. Meanwhile, practical reverence for Freedom and practical reverence for Truth, sedulously cultivated both by Christians and by secularists, whether British or Russian, should do much to promote mutual understanding, growing respect and happy co-operation.—Ed. *M.C.*]

TRUTH IN THE PULPIT.

Sir,

Archdeacon Rigg has opportunely raised some very interesting questions in your September issue in his able article 'Speaking the Truth and some of its Problems,' but, as a layman, I find little satisfaction in his treatment of Truth in the pulpit, which is the most important and urgent aspect of his theme.

Surely the Archdeacon is not satisfied with the way in which Truth is being presented in many of our pulpits to-day. Modern research and modern thought have made extremely important differences in our understanding and interpretation of the Bible and Church Doctrine, some knowledge of which has been diffused outside the pulpit.

Yet the teaching in many pulpits gives no indication that this is the case. Modern research is ignored. Modern conclusions are neglected. The old interpretations and the old doctrines are repeated.

I venture on but one illustration of this attitude. It is now more than three years since the Doctrinal Report was issued. That Report took some sixteen years to compose. The Report seemed disconcerting to the more old-fashioned and less educated Church people. It indicated that there were serious doctrinal differences within the ranks of the English clergy, and that a number of eminent divines, in the interests of truth, had felt compelled to reject some of the traditional Church doctrines and to re-state others.

How much of this have we heard from the pulpits of our Church? Almost nothing. Had the Doctrinal Report re-affirmed the old doctrinal views, and been united in rejecting the modern ones, we should have heard much about it from our pulpits.

But since the Doctrinal Report was compelled in the interests of truth to say something very different, the clergy of the Church, to whom the laity look for instruction in religious truth, have with rare exceptions told the laity nothing at all about it.

A clerical conspiracy of silence seems to prevail where we ought to have had sincere and open-minded endeavour to present new truth even though it conflicted with old traditions and ancient dogmas.

J. Ernest Jarratt.

22 Hesketh Road,
Southport.
November 23, 1941.

A REVISED SERVICE OF INFANT BAPTISM.

Sir,

A copy of the *Modern Churchman* of September 1941, which contains the further revision of 'A Revised Service of Infant Baptism' published in 1936, has been passed round to the members of the Church Council of this parish for their remarks. Here for the last 6½ years Holy Baptism has normally been administered only at 4 p.m. on the first Sunday of the month, but with hymns and short addresses and in the presence of representatives (of both sexes) of the Church Council who lay their hands on the children at the utterance of the words 'We receive this child.'

At first we used the 1662 Book with modifications. But we adopted the 1936 'Revised Service' on its appearance.

All members of the Church Council are convinced of the importance both of insisting on the presence of Godparents of both sexes and also of so conducting the Service that it may be really congregational and set forth the meaning of the Church visibly — before the eyes of those who bring the children to Baptism; rubricks concerning these two points might with advantage be added.

All but two of the members of the Council prefer the 1941 form to that of 1936.

One writes: 'I consider the different wordings a decided improvement. They should help the Godparents to realize their serious undertakings.'

But another would like to see the word 'help' added to the question 'Will you faithfully teach him to resist all evil?'; and instead of the words 'We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock' the words 'We receive this child into the family of Christ's Church.'

A third refers to the words 'We perceive how by His outward gesture and deed, etc.' He would omit 'by His outward gesture and deed'; put 'see' for 'perceive'; and read simply 'We see how He declared His goodwill toward them.' He would also substitute 'fully agreed' for 'fully persuaded.' He suggests indeed that 'all words or sentences which can be simplified should be, as there are so many types of people in the parish who at some time or other will attend the Baptism Service.'

Another specially approves the substitution of 'resist' for 'renounce' on the ground that everyone knows what the former word means, but he refers to the difficulty of the words 'as a little child.' (There is indeed little doubt that, unless 'like' is here substituted for 'as' in the reading of the Gospel, some will receive the impression that the words mean 'from childhood.') But he concludes, 'Many of us are not able, through lack of study, to go deeply into these things, and for my part I am content to leave them in the hands of 'Modern Churchmen,' as the Christian faith, although nearly 2,000 years old, must be kept modern.'

J. W. Povah, Vicar.

E. Wassell, Secretary, Church Council.

S. Marks, Londonderry.

In the Diocese of Birmingham.

Sir,

In accordance with your invitation the following suggestions are made:—

1. Page 280, *The Modern Churchman,* September, 1941:

   The Parents and Godparents standing at the Font, the Congregation standing and facing the Font — and so remaining throughout the Service — the Minister shall say:

   Reason. I have seen great confusion when the 'holders' of ten infants tried to kneel on low stools crowded round the font.

   I have seen the congregation kneel, stand, or even sit, with their backs to the font, and some trying to kneel facing the font, but the wrong way round in a narrow pew!

2. Page 281, line 8 from top:

   To claim membership for him in Christ's Church through baptism, or—through baptism (about to be administered) and to promise, etc.

   Reason. To 'claim' membership in Christ's Church before baptism seems an anomaly; to acknowledge him a child of God is on quite a different plane.

3. Page 281, line 15 from top:

   whom we, with grateful hearts, present before Thee now.
   or — omit 'with grateful hearts.'

   Reason. The 'grateful hearts' seems to need to be closer to the 'we' which it qualifies.

4. Page 281, line 4 from foot:

   by teaching and example.

   Reason. To very many of the parents and godparents the word 'precept' has no really definite meaning, only a vague suggestion of the 119th Psalm. A 'teacher' is given as one of the meanings of 'preceptor' in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, so 'teaching' should do for 'precept.'

5. Page 281, line 3 from foot:

   Commandments in plural.

   Reason. Our people are accustomed to 'This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it,' so the plural would have more meaning for them than the singular.

6. Page 282, line 2 from top:

   the strength to oppose evil and to overcome temptation.

   Reason. To withstand evil to many people would mean simply another way of putting 'to overcome temptation,' whereas 'to oppose evil' might suggest to them that it is our duty to oppose evil customs, injustices and so forth, and that we need God's help to enable us to do it.

7. Page 282, line 12 from top:

   to teach all nations and to baptise them.

   Reason. The 'to' seems to link up commandment and baptise more clearly.

8. Page 282, line 13 from top:

   Could not 'to us' be left out?

   Reason. 'To us' here, so near to 'this baptism,' *i.e.* the baptism of the infant or infants present, seems to me to be a little confusing; it shifts the direction of the prayer suddenly and then the direction has to be switched back to 'this child' again. It feels a little clumsy.

9. Page 282, line 16 from top:

May come to know the fulness of Thy grace, and Thy power to cleanse and strengthen day by day.

Reason. 'Daily' seems to qualify cleanse and strengthen more aptly than it can qualify power. Or how would 'the fulness of Thy grace and Thy daily power to . . .' etc.?

10. Page 282, line 15 from foot:

baptise it with water, or, as in the Scottish Prayer Book, 1929, Public Baptism of Infants, 'And then, naming it after them, he shall dip it in the water, or pour water upon it, saying,' etc.

Reason. I have been told in all seriousness that the Salvation Army does not use water for baptism. 'They baptise with a flag.' Of course, the above direction is quite unnecessary when a priest is baptising, but in a case of urgency when a layman or woman was baptising a dying child it might be useful.

11. Page 282, line 14 from foot:

'in' the Name.

Reason. 'In' seems clearer as well as more dearly familiar than 'into.'

12. Page 282, line 5 from foot:

And to continue Christ's faithful, etc.

Reason. Syntax of this in the original form very queer, don't you think? But the 'to' helps to make it clearer.

13. Page 283, line 2 from top:

may be brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life, and that, by following the example of our Saviour Christ, he may be made like unto Him.

Or — that he may be brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him.

Reason. As it stood it sounded to me as though 'be made like unto Him' was part of an action of Christ which we were meant to follow.

14. Page 283, line 4 from top:

'All we' instead of 'we all.'

Reason. A misprint probably. 'All we' lets the 'we' come next to the 'who.'

15. Page 283, line 15 from top:

Omit 'all Standing.'

Reason. Of course, only if the Rubric at beginning of the service is altered.

16. Page 283, lines 7 to 8 from foot:

Insert 'Will you pray for him and help him to learn and to do all these things?' Answer: 'I will, the Lord being my helper.'

Reason. Would not the above help the parents and godparents to fulfil their duty to the child? It is from Public Baptism of Infants, the Scottish Book of Common Prayer: Approved on behalf of the College of Bishops of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, 1929.

Pitlochry, Perthshire. I. SOMERS NEILL.
November 25th, 1941.

SIR,

POPULAR LECTURES ON THE BIBLE.

I shall be glad if you will kindly allow me to draw the attention of members of the Union and others who may be interested to the course of lectures to be given in London in the New Year by Mr. R. B. Henderson, M.A., B.D., Manchester Reader in Religious Education in the University of Oxford. The course should be of interest to teachers, and the assistance of your readers is invited in making it known. The course is as follows:—

At the Central Club, Y.W.C.A., Great Russell Street (near Tottenham Court Road Underground Station), on Saturday afternoons, 2.30 p.m.

January 24th. 'Making of the Bible.'
February 14th. 'The Truth about Daniel.'
March 7th. 'The History of Satan.'

T. J. WOOD.

249 Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2.
November 29th, 1941.

SIR,

THE WAY AND THE M.C.U.

It is gratifying to note that Mr. Victor Fisher does not dispute the corrections of his former letter made by Prof. Keeton and myself. But he proceeds to ignore some of them when, for example, he refers to the Commission of professional theologians and researchers (including a Dean, a Provost and a History Professor) appointed by the M.C.U. Council to consider Christian Peace Aims as an 'amateur' Commission, and to its Report as 'the Kingdon Report.' However flattered I may feel by the use of my name in connection with the Report of so distinguished a body, accuracy compels me to repeat that the Report is a composite work — to which, in fact, my individual contribution was not the greatest.

Mr. Fisher's idea of 'quoting from' the Report seems to be to take a few phrases out of their sentences and fill up with dots, thus leaving the reader with a very different impression than would be gained from reading the whole sentences in their context. And he actually refers to one phrase as being 'the primary concern' of the Report when the words 'above all' are in fact attached to an adversative sentence in the *same* paragraph. Such methods of criticism scarcely reflect the 'wisdom of distinguished scholars' which he claims as characteristic of the M.C.U.

There are other inaccuracies in Mr. Fisher's letter. But I am glad to be able to agree whole-heartedly with his penultimate paragraph; here he is preaching to the already converted, so far as I am concerned — and, I feel sure, all the other members of the Commission. It was clearly stated in the earlier Report on the *Principles of Christian Social Ethics* (p. 9; p. 8 of the reprint) that 'we must never give an uncritical allegiance to any secular party or movement, which is bound to appeal too largely to the selfish interests of some one section of the community.' Some of Mr. Fisher's statements rather suggest that he *does* do that; wherever the *Peace Aims Report* may come near to doing so, its language is tentative and guarded—probably too much so for many of its readers.

H. P. KINGDON.

Exeter College, Oxford.
December 1st, 1941.

SIR,

Mr. Kingdon and his friends must forgive me if I decline to continue this discussion further in your pages. Mr. Kingdon seems obsessed with details. I have tried in this public controversy to deal with main principles.

I called the Peace Aims Commission, of which Mr. Kingdon has constituted himself the mouthpiece, an amateur commission, and I adhere to that description even though he seeks to overawe me by saying that he has actually got a Dean, a Provost and a History Professor behind him—doubtless very eminent men but not necessarily experts on the intricacies of European politics, inter-racial relations, and the economic post-war needs of millions of people living between the North Sea, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. It reminds me of the famous 'three tailors of Tooley Street.'

The whole tenour of that part of Mr. Kingdon's editorial in the autumn issue of *The Way* referring to foreign affairs reveals a sort of distrust of the small nations gallantly fighting against a murderous gangster oppression, and a sort of subdued sympathy for the victims within Germany of the Nazi tyranny. I can only deduce that Mr. Kingdon is one of those perverse people who claim to be so broad-minded that they usually take the wrong view. As for his invoking the National Peace Council as a deciding authority, that strange body has not distinguished itself for loyalty to the country in its hour of need. Mr. Kingdon is a young man. He may learn better as he grows older.

To discuss post-war peace settlements at this stage of the war is somewhat 'previous': it is certainly silly: it may be mischievous. I made my original protest against the Report mainly because one suggestion in it was particularly mischievous. When the plenipotentiaries of twenty nations—the victims and victors of the aggressor states—meet at the ultimate peace conference it is happily unlikely that Mr. Kingdon and his co-workers will be invited to attend. In the interval we must see to it that British public opinion is never again anaesthetised into such a state of Utopian 'melioritis' as characterised the twenty years between 1919 and 1939, which left this country unarmed while Germany became a gigantic fortress, and which exposed Europe to all the unspeakable horrors of the present conflict—the ultimate issue of which is not yet.

F. VICTOR FISHER.

26 Buckland Crescent, Hampstead, London, N.W.3.
December 4th, 1941.

SIR,

I agree with Mr. Victor Fisher that *The Way* has been pushing Federal Union and other non-patriotic measures in a way calculated to divert the M.C. Union from its proper objects and cause its disruption.

I protested to the Editor and even to the President of the Union that I did not wish to receive *The Way*, but it continued to be inflicted upon me, and so I resigned from the Union, as I have from other Church Societies which spread pacifist and socialist-communist propaganda but not protests against it.

But I continue to take the *Modern Churchman*.

L. RICHMOND WHEELER.

Grantchester, Chyngton Road, Seaford.
November 3rd, 1941.

[We regret having had to hold over other correspondence.—ED. *M.C.*]